(c) if so, by what time Government would start and clomplete the construction of this bridge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Survey for a rail birdge across river Ganga near Patna completed in February 1991 revealed that the cost of the work would be around Rs. 468 crores with a negative financial return. Due to constraint of resources, it has not been found feasible to take up this work for the present.

Increase in the rate of Railway sleepers

840. SHRI G. G. SWELL: Will the Minister fo RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have enhanced the rate of evergreen railway sleepers in 1987-88 by 30 per cent above the rate for 1986-87 and in the year 1988-89 by 5 per cent above the rate for 1987-88;

(b) whether it is a fact that the enhanced quantum has not been paid to the suppliers in Meghalaya;

(c) the total amount due to the suppliers on this score;

(d) the reasons for not paying them; and

(e) whether a report has been called from Government of Meghalaya which is the agency for placement of orders and disbursement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) There was 30 per cent increase during 1987-88 over the year 1986-87. However, during the year 1988-89, there was no increase over the previous year.

(b) to (e) Railways purchased sleepers through State Forest Department. Due payment has been made to them.

Running of Ganga Cauvery Express Train

841. SHRI NARESH C. PUGLIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ganga Cauvery Express runs between Varanasi and Madras and *vice-versa* covering middle stations viz. Jabalpur, Itarsi, Nagpur, Chandrapur etc.;

(b) what is the total distance of this route with details of distance between each station;

(c) whether it is a fact that the distance would be short after conversion of Chandrapur—Gondia—Jabalpur-Varanasi narrow gauge into broad gauge line;

(d) if so, the extent of distance that would be short as a result of such conversion;

(e) what is the total number of trains going and coming at present from five southern States (Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh) which connect Uttar Pradesh and Bihar via Jabalpur; and

(f) what are the names of each train and what is total revenue by passenger trains and goods trains during the last three years, year-wise with revenue amount?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The distance between Varanasi and Madras via Jabalpur and Itarsi is 2144 kms. Inter-sectional distance is as follows:

Varanasi-Jabalpur	504 kms.
Jabalpur-Itarsi	245 kms.
Itarsi-Nagpur	298 kms.
Nagpur-Chandrapur-Balharshah	222 kms.
Balharshah-Madras	875 kms.
Total:	2144 kms.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Approximately 170 kms.

(e) & (f) Four pairs of express trains via Jabalpur that run from Southern States to Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are as follows:

(i) 6039/6040 Madras-Varanasi Ganga Cauvery Express (bi-weekly)

(ii) 6043/6044 Madras-Patna Express (weekly)

(iii) 7489/7490 Cochin/Tirupati-Varanasi Express (weekly)

(iv) 7491/7492 Tirupati-Varanasi Express (bi-weekly)

Statistics on earning of revenue of train-wise or route-wise is not maintained.

Setting up of stainless steel hot rolling stackle mill

842. PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India Limited propose to set up a Stainless Steel hot rolling stackle mill for the manufacture of Stainless Steel in the country;

(b) whether the imports of Stainless Steel are rising day by day;

(c) whether SAIL had earlier identified the cost and availability of the plant in different countries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof; and details of the plants being manufactured in each of the European countries and Japan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): Yes, Sir.

(b) Details of production and imports by Salem Steel Plant are given below:

Year	Production of cold rolled stainless steel (Tonnes)	Import of Hot Rolled Stainless Steel Coils used as raw material	
		Directly imported (tonnes)	Indian slabs converted abroad and imported as Hot Rolled Stainless Steel Coils (Tonnes)
1988-89	34,328	37,600	302
1989-90	31,259	27,415	5,653
1990-91	41,103	32,846	19,363
1991-92 (Plan) . .	60,000	30,250	37,050

(c) and (d) While formulating the scheme, SAIL and its consultants, with a view to acquainting themselves with all the technological aspects of stainless steel rolling and obtainable product quality, held discussions with some of the leading stainless steel manufactures equipment builders. Based on inforfation so gathered, SAIL concluded that world over double stand rolling mills are used for manufacturing limited quantities of hot rolled stainless steel; that it would be difficult to obtain process know-how for single stand mills; that it would be difficult to produce thinner hot rolled coils in single stand mills; and that in European countries and also in Japan, conventional hot strip mills and stackle mills are being manufactured for hot rolling of stainless steel, etc. SAIL had also obtained budgetary quotations for the mill proposed for installation, from some of the leading manufacturers.